the wake of its recent military setbacks. However, there is no information indicating a special emphasis on India in these public relation exercises. There have, however, been references of India in LTTE publications which indicate LTTE interest in future policy of Government of India.

(b) In this context, the Government have not received any communication from LTTE representatives in Sri Lanka for improvement of relations or seeking support to the cause of LTTE.

(c) Does not arise.

Repatriation of Indian Children from Pakistan Custody

1176. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Pakistani social organisation "Edhi' has drawn the attention of Government to the pathetic condition of 38 Indian children, who were rounded up by Pak Security forces for illegal fishing in Pak-waters;

(b) if so, whether "Edhi' has requested the Government to repatriate these children from their custody;

(c) if so, the Government's response thereto; and

(d) the total numbers of other Indians in Pakistan's custody, being illegal entrants?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI IK. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) On 18th May 1996, the Pakistani newspaper "Dawn' carried a report which stated that 34 Indian children were lodged in the Edhi Welfare Centre, Karachi. The report further stated that these children has been arrested by the Pakistani authorities in September 1994.

The matter was immediately taken up with the Government of Pakistan who was requested to provide personal details/ documents of these children. Permission was also sought for officials of the High Commission of India, Islamabad to visit Karachi so as to obtain access to these children to determine their antecedents for taking further necessary action to bring them to India.

Maulana Edhi of the Welfare Centre was also contacted to determine their background and ascertain their welfare. Maulana Edhi informed the High Commission in writing that formal permission of the Government of Pakistan would be required by his organisation for interacting with our Mission regarding these children.

Government of Pakistan has as yet neither provided details nor has it allowed our Mission officials to visit these children. In the present situation we are unable to make any authoritative assessment regarding these children. There have however, been indications that these children are from Gujarat and Daman & Diu and may have been in the fishing boats which were apprehended by Pakistani agencies for allegedly fishing in Pakistani waters.

We are actively pursuing this matter with Pakistan.

(dl According to available information, at present there are 1249 Indian civilian prisoners, fishermen and crew members of cargo vessels in the custody of Pakistan. Pakistan does not provide details regarding Indians in their detention.

Violation of air-space by foreign aircrafts

1177. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any violation of air-space by foreign aircraft have been noticed during the last three months;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (c) There have been two incidents in which passenger aircraft belonging to Bangladesh and Kyrgistan violated Indian airspace on 18th May 1996 and 12th June 1996 respectively. In both the cases, the pilot deviated from the approved/planned flight path to avoid bad weather.